JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Vice President, Development and Communications

About Forefront

Forefront’s mission is to build a vibrant social impact sector for all the people of Illinois. Founded in 1974, we are the nation’s only statewide membership association for nonprofits, philanthropy, public agencies, advisors, and our allies. We provide education, advocacy, thought leadership, and project management to attract investment to the sector, develop top talent, improve systems and policies, and build organizational capacity. Currently, our Members number over 1,100. Our Nonprofit Members work in 26 issue areas across the state. Our Grantmaking Members include private foundations, such as family and independent foundations, public charities, corporations, donor-advised funds, charitable trusts, and individual philanthropists. Our Advisor Members include consultants, attorneys, investment managers, and other professional advisors to grantmakers and nonprofits. We also actively engage social entrepreneurs, impact investors, and B-Corps in our work to spur innovation in the sector. Read more on our website at myforefront.org.

About the Position

The Vice President, Development and Communications is the senior-level professional responsible for the development and implementation of Forefront strategic fundraising and communications plans. The position brings strategic insight, organizational ability, attention to detail, and effective relationship skills to Forefront development and communications programs, maintaining a clear perspective of the organization’s high-level goals while simultaneously understanding the tactical needs of execution. The Vice President, Development and Communications reports to the President and CEO, is a member of the senior Leadership Team, and acts as staff liaison to the Resource Development Committee. S/he works cross-departmentally and collaboratively with members of Forefront staff and leadership.

Essential Job Duties and Expected Outcomes

1. Leads Forefront fundraising and communications plans to contribute to the organization reaching its strategic goals. Provides leadership in increasing contributed revenue and enhancing communications and marketing initiatives.

2. Ensures that proposals, reports, sponsorship solicitations, and correspondence are submitted in a timely fashion and that all deadlines are met. Works to ensure that materials are persuasive and compelling, and of the highest professional quality. Oversees prospect research.
3. Works closely with the President and CEO and other staff in designing, planning, and managing the fundraising plan and coordinates cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship strategies. Staffs the President and CEO as needed, and attends select donor meetings.

4. Supervises and oversees the work of the Director, Communications, Development Manager, and Development Coordinator. Motivates and mentors staff and encourages teamwork.

5. Articulates the case for support of Forefront in clear and compelling language that reflects the ideas and actions within the strategic plan and builds awareness about the organization. Ensures that communication vehicles — including print, web, e-communications, and social media — articulate and demonstrate clarity and consistency to reinforce uniform messaging.

6. Develops and manages the ongoing implementation of the fundraising plan to support annual operating needs, as well as incremental support for strategic initiatives. Guides staff in grant proposal development and creative sponsorship opportunities. Implements new tactics such as expanding the organization’s donor base, establishing an individual giving program, and engaging new donors in other areas of the state.

7. Staffs the Resource Development Committee (RDC) and galvanizes members of the RDC and the Board of Directors to leverage their networks to identify potential donors and engage them in successful cultivation and solicitation strategies.

8. Plays a key, cross-functional role, collaborating across service departments and bringing leadership and insight to strategic discussions about Forefront growth and evolution.

9. Coordinates with the organization’s Finance department, monitoring departmental and grant project budgets, projections, and results.

10. Attends external meetings in the philanthropic community, effectively serving as a representative and advocate for Forefront.

11. Attends key Forefront events, programs, and meetings to support external relations with donors, volunteers, stakeholders, and key leaders in the social sector community.

12. Participates as a member of the senior Leadership Team and attends meetings of Forefront Board of Directors.

13. Keeps abreast of current trends in philanthropy — both locally and nationally — and communications and marketing. Maintains required job skills and core professional competencies. Attends and participates in educational programs and conferences to ensure professional development.
14. Shares information obtained at conferences, trainings, and seminars with other staff members, as appropriate, and provides Human Resources with training certificates if they are obtained.

15. Accepts feedback from supervisor and implements it into practice on a consistent basis.

16. Performs other duties as assigned.

Performance Measures

- Deadlines are met for submissions of proposals, reports, and sponsorship solicitations.
- Annual fundraising goals are achieved, strategies to secure increased support are implemented, and new donor relationships are developed.
- Forefront overall communication vehicles and strategies are enhanced.
- Forefront identity and visibility as a leadership organization for Illinois’ philanthropic and social sector community is increased.
- Leadership and contributions to a respectful, effective, and collaborative work environment are demonstrated.

Position Qualifications

- Bachelor’s degree is required and Master’s degree or fundraising certificate is preferred. Ten to twelve years of progressively responsible experience in the development and communications field and nonprofit administration.

- Experience in managing a team, as well as engaging with senior leadership and various groups of Members, funders, Board and Committee members, staff, and others across a broad spectrum. Excellent interpersonal skills.

- Proven ability to drive fundraising results in a complex, fast-moving, and changing environment. An entrepreneurial spirit with a high degree of creativity, flexibility, and initiative.

- A mission-oriented development and communications professional, with commitment to the growth of the Forefront while maintaining a steady focus on quantitative goals.

- Strong communication and presentation skills with the ability to command the respect of those in the philanthropic and nonprofit community. Knowledge of the local, state, and national philanthropic landscape.

- Ability to engage and contribute to high-level conversations about the organization’s strategy and growth, while maintaining a clear understanding of the tactics and details that support it.
• Impeccable writing and editing skills, with the ability to develop clear and meaningful written materials, both independently and in collaboration with other staff members. Understands various communication vehicles and strategies to convey information.

• Personable demeanor, with the natural ability to cultivate honest and open long-term relationships with stakeholders.

• Knowledge of nonprofit finance, budgeting, and accounting processes with the ability to navigate restricted, unrestricted, and multi-year gift arrangements.

To Apply

Send a resume and cover letter to recruitment@myforefront.org, or via postal mail to Forefront, 208 South LaSalle Street, Suite 1540, Chicago, IL 60604.

The position will remain open until filled.

No phone calls please. Forefront is an equal-opportunity employer.